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Obey: Russert's death is a loss for the country

STEVENS POINT, Wis. - Rep. Dave Obey says Tim Russert's sudden death is a body blow to NBC News and the entire country.

The Democrat who chairs the House Appropriations Committee says Russert was devoted to reporting hard news in an era where the media increasingly focuses on trivial matters.

Obey says Russert made news gathering and this country a much better and stronger place.

Obey led the members of the Wisconsin Democratic Party in a moment of silence for Russert at its state convention in Stevens Point Friday night.

Russert died earlier Friday of a heart attack while working. He was 58.